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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/815,646	03/23/2001	Scott H. Jaeger	11506/3	4634

26646 7590 03/03/2006

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EXAMINER	
BUI, KIM T	
ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3626	

DATE MAILED: 03/03/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/815,646	JAEGER ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Kim T. Bui	3626	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *13 September 2005*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-16* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) *10-15* is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-9 and 16* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election without traverse of Group 1 of claims 1-9 and 16 in the reply filed on 09/13/2005 is acknowledged.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

> The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claims 1-7, 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

(A) As per claim 1, "the associated impact values" on line 9 lacks proper antecedent basis.

(B) As per claim 7, the claim recites a system. However, the body of claim 7 recites no interconnected structure(s) to make up the system.

(C) As per claim 16, "the associated impact values" on line 8 lacks proper antecedent basis.

(D) Dependent claims 2-6 incorporate the deficiencies of the claim they depend on and are therefore rejected.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1, 3-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lee et al. (5828776).

(A) As per claim 1, Lee et al. closes a method for determining an overall level of confidence for a medical conclusion (i.e. normal or abnormal object) comprising the steps of:

a. determining at least one medical element from a set of medical data (i.e. object of medical image), wherein each element is associated with an impact parameter (i.e., set of measurements whose values determine the characteristic such as density or texture of an object) for the medical clinical conclusion . Lee et al., col. 17, lines 17-19, col. 18, lines 39-53.

b. for each medical element, generating a confidence parameter as a function of the medical clinical conclusion. Lee et al., col. 5, lines 35-45.

As per the step for determining an overall level of confidence parameter as a function of each of the confidence parameters and the associated impact values. It is unclear if Lee discloses this step. However, Lee teaches on col. 19, lines 5-8 and on col. 20, lines 23-36 that confidence values can be combined and that an overall rating of a slide can be done by combing classification data and confidence factors. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include an over rating or overall level of confidence parameter with the motivation of providing an evaluation of the specimen as a whole. Lee, col. 19, lines 47-48.

(B) As per claim 7, Lee et al. discloses a system for determining an overall level of confidence for a medical conclusion (i.e.) comprising a processor adapted to :

a. determining at least one medical element from a set of medical data (i.e. object of medical image), wherein each element is associated with an impact parameter (i.e., set of measurements whose values determine the characteristic such as density or texture of an object) for the medical clinical conclusion (i.e. a conclusion if an object is normal or abnormal). Lee et al., col. 4, lines 47-48, col. 17, lines 17-19, col. 18, lines 39-53.

b. for each medical element, generating a confidence parameter as a function of the medical clinical conclusion. Lee et al., col. 5, lines 5-45.

As per the determination of an overall level of confidence parameter as a function of each of the confidence parameters and the associated impact values. It is unclear if Lee discloses this limitation. However, Lee teaches on col. 19, lines 5-8 and on col. 20, lines 23-36 that confidence values can be combined and that an overall rating of a slide can be done by combing classification data and confidence factors. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include an over rating or overall level of confidence parameter with the motivation of providing an evaluation of the specimen as a whole. Lee, col. 19, lines 47-48.

(C) As per claim 3, Lee et al. discloses the confidence value as a function of a features measurement values on col. 18, lines 54-65.

(D) As per claim 4, Lee et al. teaches the fuzzy theory and membership function on col. 21, lines 54-57, col. 22, lines 9-10.

(E) As per claims 5, 6. Lee et al. discloses a linear combination function(s) defining confidence parameter as independent variable on col. 32, lines 13-32.

6. Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lee et al. as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Friedman (6055494).

(A) As per claim 2, Lee et al fails to expressly recite the phrase parsing. This, however, is well known as evidenced by Friedman. See Friedman, the abstract, Fig. 1, col. 2, line 60 to col. 3, line 21. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to include phrase parsing into Lee et al with the motivation of expanding the applicability of the system to include processing/classifying of natural language medical data. Friedman, col. 1, lines 20-25.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

7. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –
>
> (b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

8. Claims 8, 9,16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Lapointe et al. (2003/0105731)

(A) As per claim 8, Lapointe et al. discloses a method for determining an overall level of confidence for a medical conclusion (i.e. risk of preterm delivery) comprising the steps of:

a. storing a plurality of possible clinical conclusion (i.e. risk of preterm delivery), Lapointe, page 23, paragraph 0416, Figs 12,13, outputs A, B, Fig. 14, outputs C, D.

b. storing a plurality of medical essential elements (i.e. clinical data, patient's variables, patient history information). Lapointe et al., page 8, paragraph 0097, page 21, paragraphs 0034-0360.

c. for each clinical conclusion, storing a plurality of membership function(s) associating an essential element with a clinical conclusion. Lapointe et al., page 7, paragraph 0079, page 8, paragraph 0097.

d. storing impact parameter(s) associating a weight of an element toward the output/clinical conclusion. Lapointe et al., page 1, paragraph 0008, page 10, paragraphs 0110, 0112, 0116.

e. determining at least one relevant medical essential element. Lapointe et al., page 4, paragraph 0027.

f. generating an overall confidence parameter for the medical clinical conclusion as a function of the at least one relevant medical essential element, the associated membership function and the impact parameter. Lapointe et al Fig 11A, page 19, paragraphs 0311-0313 wherein the medical conclusion(s) in this clinical application are . a low, high or moderate risk of preterm delivery within a time frame , and the calculated risk value for associated interpretations (i.e. low, high or moderate) representing the confidence parameter of the conclusion(s).

(B) As per claim 9, Lapointe et al. discloses a method for determining an overall level of confidence for a medical conclusion (i.e.. a low, high or moderate risk of preterm delivery within a time frame) comprising the steps of:

a. storing at least one membership function relating a medical element(s) (i.e. clinical data, patient's variables, patient history information) with a membership confidence value (i.e. in a binary form or quantitative/continuous values) for a clinical conclusion. Lapointe et al., page 7, paragraph 0079, page 8, paragraph 0097.

b. storing a criterion impact parameter representing an important of an medical element with respect to the clinical conclusion (i.e. a low, high or moderate risk of preterm delivery within a time frame) for each membership function. Lapointe et al. page 10, paragraphs 0110, 0113.

c. determining an overall confidence value (i.e., calculated risk values and its interpretations such as low, high or moderate) for a clinical conclusions (i.e. . a low, high or moderate risk of preterm delivery within a time frame) as a function of at least one membership function and at least one criterion impact parameter. Lapointe et al., Fig. 11A, page 19, paragraphs 0311-0313.

(C) As per claim 16, Lapointe et al. discloses a method for determining an overall level of confidence for a conclusion (i.e.. a low, high or moderate risk of preterm delivery within a time frame) comprising the steps of:

a. determining at least one element from a set of data (i.e. clinical data, patient history information and set of variables). Lapointe et al., page 8, paragraph 0097, page 21, paragraphs 0034-0360 wherein each element (i.e., variable) is associated with an impact parameter for a clinical conclusion (i.e. a low, high or moderate risk of preterm delivery within a time frame). Lapointe et al., page 10, paragraphs 0110, 0113.

b. for each element, generating a confidence parameter (i.e., a calculated risk value of .288432) as a function of the conclusion. Lapointe et al. Fig 11A, paragraphs 0322-0313.

c. determining an overall level of confidence parameter (i.e., risk report with calculated risk value(s) for associated interpretations such as low, high or moderate for a clinical conclusions (i.e. . a low, high or moderate risk of preterm delivery within a time frame) as a function of each of the confidence parameter and the associated impact values shown in Fig 11A, B and page 19, paragraphs 0311-0313 of Lapointe et al..

Conclusion

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. " System for differential diagnosis" (5622171), "Computerized diagnosis system" (5878746); "Neural network for determining testing sufficiency" (5130936), "Signal interpretation engine" (US20034/0149678); "Image classification apparatus" (5754676); "The study of nursing informatics", Graves Judith R. et al., Oct 1996, Holistic nursing practice, v11,n1, p15(10), Dialog File 149, Acc. 01659607.

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kim T. Bui whose telephone number is 571-272-6768. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 8:30A.M. to 5:00P.M..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Joseph Thomas can be reached on 571-272-6776. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

KTB
11/25/05.

JOSEPH THOMAS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER